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# CONSTIPATION,

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# CONSTIPATION,

PLAINLY TREATED,

AND

RELIEVED WITHOUT THE USE OF DRUGS

BY

JOSEPH F. EDWARDS, M.D.,

Author of "How a Person Threatened or Afflicted with Bright's Disease  
*Ought to Live.*"

SECOND EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.

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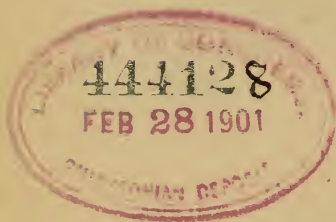
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# CONSTIPATION,

PLAINLY TREATED.

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## INTRODUCTORY.

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“How are your bowels; are they regular?”  
“Oh, yes, Doctor, they are pretty fair.” “Are they opened daily?” “Oh, no!” “How often are they moved?” “Well, sometimes every two or three days, and sometimes not for a week.” The foregoing conversation, which I venture to say has repeatedly taken place between every physician in active practice and many of his patients, is the author’s excuse for giving the following pages to the public.

It is astonishing, and I may say, incomprehensible, but nevertheless it is a dismal fact, that even among intelligent persons, little or no attention is paid to this all important matter of regular and free evacuations from the bowels. I recall to mind one striking case of an exceedingly

intelligent lady of sixty, who told me that she had never, throughout her long life, given a second thought to her bowels; when she had the inclination to have them moved, she generally, *but not always*, would seek the water closet; if the desire did not manifest itself, well, no matter, she did not care; and sometimes, she told me, a week or more would elapse without one single evacuation. This is not an isolated case. I venture to say, without fear of contradiction, that there are more persons in the world who are costive (generally through their own fault, or, at least, through want of information on the subject), by a large majority, than are regular. I have now under my care a woman who tells me that she frequently passes three weeks without a single evacuation. I set myself to work to induce regular daily passages, and, although well advanced in years, with her stomach and liver much disordered from this costive habit, the improvement in her appearance and in her general health has been marvelous. The Hon. Eli K. Price once told me of a gentle-



man, eighty years of age, who, possessed of an elegant constitution, seemed to bid fair to become a centenarian, but who, in course of conversation, said that his only trouble was that his bowels were not regular. Why do you not make them so, asked Mr. Price. "Why, how can I?" was the answer; "they will not act; how can I make them do what they will not do?" Eat bran bread, fruit, and so on, was the advice given. And in commenting on this case, Mr. Price said to me: "just think of it; there was a man who had lived in this world for over eighty years, and in all that time had failed to learn how to properly care for his bowels."

I have been led to regard regularity of evacuations from the bowels as one of the most important elements in the preservation of health and the promotion of longevity; and on the other hand, costiveness or constipation as one of the most active agents in the production of many of the diseases not dependent upon the presence of a special poison for their origin, and of producing

such a vitiated and disordered condition of the system, as to nurture and favor the development of diseases even which do require these special poisons. Therefore, I have become firmly convinced that if human nature thoroughly understood and appreciated the great necessity of regular evacuations, and would practice such simple rules as would secure them, much disease and discomfort would be avoided, and a better state of general health and longer life would result.

Therefore, it is my purpose in this book, to endeavor to demonstrate, in easily understood language, using the plainest and simplest words only, the great importance, I might even say the absolute necessity of this regularity, and to point out certain hygienic rules which will insure it, leaving the medicinal side of the question to the *intelligent* physician; I emphasize intelligent, because there is no *malady* (I use the word advisedly) so difficult to overcome and so trying to the patience both of the physician and his patient as an obstinate case of constipation; while at the same time,

the indiscriminate and *unintelligent* use of medicine, instead of relieving the constipation, only serves to confirm the costive habit and render the cure more tedious and difficult. Therefore, let me tell you now (and I will tell you again further on, and give you my reasons then) that you will enjoy better health if you never take a *single dose of medicine* to relieve constipation, without the advice of your physician. Ever since the days of the apostle St. Thomas (I think it was) and I dare say even before his time, human nature has been skeptical, more especially the intelligent side of it, and hence has generally refused to believe any statement implicitly for which it did not have a good and satisfactory reason. Therefore, I am going to give you the why and the wherefore of every fact which I enunciate, and will not ask you to take my word for anything, but to intelligently understand and thoroughly appreciate all the ins and outs of this question of constipation. In order that I may do this, I will divide this little book into three parts:—

Part First will tell you about the functions, the duties of the stomach and bowels.

Part Second will demonstrate the great necessity for daily full and free evacuations from the bowels.

While Part Third will give you such rules of life as will tend to produce them.

I trust these few pages may prove of benefit to some one. I am sure the melancholy, despondent and almost crazy dyspeptic will derive some benefit from their perusal, while the suffering victim of hemorrhoids or piles will find in them great relief from his agony. The bilious person will find a means of relieving the engorgement of his liver, if this organ be not absolutely diseased in its structure, while those tortured with splitting headaches will experience much relief by following the directions contained herein. With the hope that the poor sufferers from the various ills produced and maintained by this hydra-headed monster, constipation, may experience relief from the perusal of this little book, I sympathetically dedicate its pages to them.

PART FIRST.

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THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STOMACH AND BOWELS.

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Many of my readers have no doubt seen the little wagon belonging to an establishment for dyeing articles of clothing, etc., which used to go about our city a few years ago, bearing the curious inscription on its sides: “We live to *dye*, and we *dye* to live.” Well, let me here suggest a similar curious motto: “We live to *eat*, and we *eat* to live.” This is a self-evident proposition. You all know that it would be utterly impossible to live unless you eat. Just as it is necessary to supply an engine with coal in order that you may generate steam, so it is an essential of life that you should supply a sufficiency of wholesome food to your digestive organs, in order that they may generate the so-called *vital power*, which enables your various organs to perform their different functions, the sum total of whose actions consti-

tutes life. The organs mainly interested in the reception of food and its preparation and transformation into a condition which renders it capable of supplying nourishment to and repairing the waste of the various organs and tissues of the body are known to the physician under the comprehensive term of the *gastro-intestinal tract*. Commencing at the mouth, this tract or canal terminates at the anus. For the sake of familiar illustration, let me compare this canal to a rubber hose. Suppose you take an ordinary hose or rubber tube, about one and a half inches in diameter, and about thirty feet long. Imagine one end of this hose to be attached to the back part of your mouth, and you have the commencement of the passage way into the stomach. The food received into your mouth passes back into this tube, and, after descending it for about one foot, it reaches a point at which the tube has become very much distended, so as to form a bag, so to speak, about ten inches long and four or five inches wide, and capable of holding from one to

two quarts; this bag is your stomach. At the right end of this bag the tube narrows down again to near its original size in the throat, and for a length of twenty-five feet lies coiled up in your abdomen, constituting the small intestine or bowel; now, it again becomes slightly enlarged (not nearly so much as when it formed your stomach), and in this enlarged condition continues for a distance of about four or five feet, to terminate in your fundament at the anus. It is the function of your stomach to receive into it your food, and to commence to digest it. Some articles of food are completely digested in the stomach, and are absorbed directly from it into the blood and carried by this fluid to nourish the system. Other articles are only partly digested by the gastric fluid in the stomach, and after undergoing this partial disintegration and transformation, they are carried out of the stomach into the small intestines, that portion of the rubber tube where it has become narrowed, and meeting here with new juices, their complete digestion is

effected, and, transformed into a milky fluid, they are taken up by small vessels provided for the purpose, and carried to the blood, prepared to become part of that fluid and to repair the wear and tear of tissue. The stomach and bowels seem to have the peculiar property of selecting from the food taken in only that which is suitable and appropriate to nourish the body, and of rejecting the rest. Just as in coal you will often find certain impurities, not fit to generate heat, so in food there are certain elements not suitable to produce vital force, and these elements, refused by the digestive and absorbing organs, are carried on by the bowels, further and further along this tube, until they are finally expelled from the body in the act of defecation. Again, there are certain vessels distributed all over the body, whose duty it is to gather up the dead and useless particles of tissue, whose work has been performed, and whose continued presence in the system would be not only unnecessary, but absolutely injurious. You probably know that every act of life, even the



most unconscious, is performed at the expense of some particles of the tissue of your body. Each act causes the destruction of those particles which have been engaged in the performance of that act, just as the generation of heat in a stove causes the destruction of the coal which has been instrumental in its production. I use the word *destruction* here in its *liberal* sense for the sake of illustration. You all know, of course, that matter is indestructible, and that what seems to be destruction is in reality only a change of condition. So that these particles of your body are not in reality destroyed, but are so altered in their composition by the different vital acts to whose performance they have given their power, that they are no longer fit to constitute a part of your body, and by one of those beautiful laws of nature, they must be removed, to furnish in turn nourishment to the various articles of vegetable life, during which process their composition is again so changed that they are once more rendered fit to nourish the human body. So that, wonderful as

it may seem, some of the particles of your brain which will be used up in reading and understanding this little book, and which will be removed from your body in a disgusting state of decomposition, foul and unclean, and not fit to be touched, may, in the course of years, again find their way into your brain, through the agency of the food you eat, and may again be used up in reading a book, of which I may, perchance, happen to be the author. These particles being unfit to longer remain in the body, must be gotten rid of. The vessels of which I have spoken, distributed over the body, take them up and carry them to the various eliminatory organs, whose duty it is to remove them from the body, among which I may mention the lungs, kidneys, etc. Prominent among them stands the bowels; the narrow portion of the rubber tube. These vessels constantly acting, bring the dead and decayed matter to the bowels and empty it into them. They are the drain pipes, so to speak, coming from the different rooms in the different houses, and carrying the

waste into the common sewer, with which the bowels might be not inaptly compared. This matter is received and stored up in the bowels as waste matter is in your privy wells, until the proper time comes for discharging it from the body ; and let me here anticipate myself by telling you that the proper time is once a day. The bowels not only play a vital part in the drama of life, but, if I may be allowed a literary liberty, they have also a mechanical function, so to speak. Your kidneys are constantly removing from the blood the elements whose combination forms urine. Now, if this urine trickled constantly from your body, it would be very annoying. Your clothing would be soiled, you would smell bad, and the surface of your body would be excoriated and made sore by the acid in your urine. So your all-wise Creator furnished you with a bladder, which is simply a reservoir, a receptacle, as it were, for the urine. Here it accumulates, drop by drop, until, the bladder being distended to a certain extent, an impression is made on the

nerves ramifying over its surface, and this impression conveyed to the brain, the desire to urinate is there originated ; and so, in obedience to this desire, your bladder is emptied, and thus so much dead and decayed matter is removed from your bodies. The same thing occurs with your bowels. The dead matter accumulates therein, as in the bladder, and finally, after reaching a certain amount, the desire to evacuate it arises, and so the refuse is removed. But let me tell you that, differing from the case of your bladder, if this desire to evacuate the bowels be neglected, the nerves will become so blunted, and the muscular wall of the intestine or rubber tube so torpid, that eventually, not only will the desire not arise of itself, that is to say, naturally, but it will be almost an impossibility for you to *force* an evacuation. You now understand enough of the functions of the gastro-intestinal tract or rubber tube to enable you to understand the remarks I will have to make on the necessity of daily evacuations from it, and how you can procure them.

PART SECOND.

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NECESSITY FOR DAILY EVACUATIONS.

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Every good housekeeper knows and appreciates the necessity of semi-annual house cleanings. If she does not scrub the floors before laying the carpets in the fall, and wash the paint, she does not consider that she has a pure and clean house. Every maid of all work has a certain day on which she must sweep the parlor, another for the dining room, and so on, and every day she must dust all the rooms. Windows must be washed and rooms aired. And all this work for what! In order that the house may be cleaned of its impurities.

All large cities vie with each other in perfecting their systems of drainage; and for what? In order that this very dead and decayed animal tissue of which I have been telling you may be removed and prevented from contaminating the air which we breathe, the water we drink, and the

food we eat. New cities are considered unhealthy, and why? Because, their drainage being imperfect, much of this refuse matter remains, to poison the inhabitants. An intelligent person going to live in the country will seek sloping ground ; and high locations are generally considered the healthiest ; why? Because, according to natural laws, drainage will be better, and the sloping ground will carry away from the vicinity of the houses that dead and decayed matter which your bodies are continually giving off. Now, does it not seem strange to you, when you stop to reflect on it, that intelligent men and women will go to all this trouble and expense to remove deleterious matter from their company, when it has once left their bodies, and yet so many of them will go on from day to day, unconcernedly performing their various duties of life, seemingly ignorant of the fact that an enormous quantity of foul, rotten and unclean matter is within their bodies, poisoning the very foundation of their lives, and sowing the seeds of disease and premature death? Does it not

seem incredible? Oh! it is a terrible thing, this ignorance of our own bodies. Was it not Pope who said, "*the noblest study of mankind is man.*" I do sincerely hope the day is not far distant when the study of physiology, in its elementary form, at least, will constitute, as it ought, one of the main points in the education of our boys and girls. Ignorance of the functions of our bodies constitutes a most prolific source of disease and misery. How can a person be expected to treat his various organs properly, if he is utterly ignorant of the way in which he should treat them.

This trouble of constipation is very frequently contracted by children when growing up. Their parents before them have not been taught to value the necessity of regular evacuations, hence they have not impressed it on their children, and so these boys and girls, when, in the midst of play and amusement, the desire to defecate comes upon them, resist it by all the means in their power, rather than have their recreation interfered with, and only yield obedience to it when its commands

become irresistible. Constantly and repeatedly refusing to listen to this voice of nature demanding a purification, a removal of poisonous matter, the bowels finally become exhausted, as I have told you, and a costive habit is established. Not being taught differently in childhood, they do not consider it injurious, when they grow to maturity, to allow their bowels to remain unopened for days at a time, and they, in turn, neglect this all-important matter in their children.

Dr. Lionel S. Beale, of England, says, in his valuable and practical work on "Slight Ailments," "You will find that people who suffer from habitual constipation, and those who have a regular but quantitatively deficient action, complain of certain unpleasant sensations. Although there is no organic disease, and if you examined every part of such person you would not find the least indication of the slightest structural change, the almost constant discomfort many of these people have to endure is really great; and not only so, but various more or less serious conditions



may result from habitual constipation. In this way that unpleasant condition known as hypochondriasis in the male and as a form of hysteria in the female, very often commences. There is even the possibility that a condition bordering upon insanity may be brought about by long continued improper action of the bowels."

Even your servant who attends to your furnace fire understands that he must clean out the ashes if he desires a good fire. If he allows the ashes to remain he may pile on the coal, but he will get no heat; the coal cannot burn, it cannot do its work, because the furnace is choked up with dead and useless coal, in the shape of ashes. The contents of the bowels are the human ashes. If you do not remove them, you may eat, but your food will not properly nourish you, for the evident reason that the vital functions necessary for the transformation of this food into nourishment suitable for the body are so interfered with by this mass of decaying animal matter within you that they cannot be properly performed. Any one who has

been constipated for some days, and then has an evacuation, cannot help but be struck by the terribly offensive odor of the passage, showing to what an extent decomposition has taken place. Do you know that the most prolific cause of typhoid fever is emanations, in the shape of foul gases, from privies and water-closets, these gases being generated by the decomposition of the matter you have passed from your bowels? Do you also know that typhoid fever is characterized by the presence of small ulcers or running sores in small glands, which are situated in your intestines or bowels? Now, does it seem out of place to imagine that the retention of a large mass of this same rotten matter in your bowels, and its undergoing decomposition there, and liberating these same poisonous gases, acting on these same little glands, might produce this same typhoid fever, or, at least, a condition very similar to it? Do you know what hemorrhoids or piles are? They are an enlargement, an engorgement with blood, of the small veins in the vicinity of the anus.

Now, can you not understand that the presence of a large amount of this poisonous matter in the lower part of the bowels—matter which ought not to be there, and which, consequently, is a foreign body—will so irritate the delicate lining of your bowels—a lining as delicate as that which coats the inside of your mouth and cheeks, with which it is both continuous and identical—as to cause an extra amount of blood to flow into its vessels, and this costive habit continuing, will eventually produce a chronic engorgement or congestion of these vessels, and you have all the sufferings and tortures of piles, as a result of this constipation? In women the womb occupies a position directly in front of the bowels, from which it is separated only by a thin membrane. Now, can you not easily perceive how this congestion of the bowels will also have a tendency to cause too much blood to flow into the womb, and to produce an engorgement of it, with all its attendant suffering? Again, the womb is movable; it is suspended in the cavity of the abdomen by ligaments or cords,

sufficiently stout and strong to keep it in its proper position when the organ is healthy ; but suppose this costive habit so irritates the womb as to cause a great, an excessive flow of blood into it ; of course it will be heavier than natural, the increase in weight being directly in proportion to the increased flow of blood. Being so much heavier than usual, the cords are unable to hold it in position, it drops down, from its own weight, and we have constipation, producing all the misfortunes of falling of the womb. Still more ; this constant irritation in the bowels keeps up a constant excess of blood in the lining membrane of the bowels, and you ultimately have a chronic inflammation of this tube set up, which, besides causing much pain and uneasiness in the abdomen, interferes with the proper digestion and absorption of your food, and hence all the phenomena of nutrition are impeded.

This mass of dead tissue remaining in the bowels undergoes decomposition, and being unable to escape in the natural way, some portion

of it is re-absorbed by the vessels ramifying over the surface of the bowels, and is carried into the blood, so that this fluid, when going its rounds to nourish the various tissues and organs, carries with it some of this poisonous material, and so poisoned blood gives poisoned nourishment to your various organs and parts.

A prominent physician of our city once compared the brain and stomach to the two balls or ends of a dumb-bell, while the nervous communication between them was likened to the shaft of a dumb-bell. This illustration he used to demonstrate the intimate connection which exists between the brain and the stomach, through the agency of the nervous system. The bowels, as you now understand, are simply a prolongation of the stomach; they are most intimately connected with the brain by a large number of nerves. In children one of the commonest causes of convulsions is constipation, and the presence of worms in the bowels; the worms acting as an irritant, a foreign body, precisely the same as a collection

of dead and decomposed matter does, will cause an irritation in the bowels, and this irritation, acting through the nerves by what is known to physicians as reflex action, will so irritate the brain as to give rise to many disordered phenomena on its part. Can you not, therefore, understand how easy it will be for constipation to produce those violent headaches to which costive people are so subject?

The liver is one of the largest and one of the most important organs in your body. How many hundred times have you heard your friends say, "I have a bilious attack?" These bilious attacks are caused by the incomplete removal from, and consequently a partial retention of the bile in, the blood, where it does not belong. When the liver removes this bile from the blood it stores it up in a small sac in that organ, from which it ultimately passes through a small duct or canal into the bowels, into which it empties at a short distance beyond the point where the narrowing of the bowel after its dilatation to form the stomach takes place.

The membrane which lines this duct is continuous and identical with that which lines the bowels. Now, can you not clearly understand how; when this undue retention of dead matter has caused an inflammation, an excess of blood in the lining of the bowels, this inflammation will extend up the bowels, through this duct or tube, and ultimately involve the liver itself? And let me tell you that neither the liver nor any other organ can properly do its duty if it is in a state of inflammation, if it has too much blood in it. This temporary engorgement, caused by a temporary constipation, if frequently repeated, will, by degrees, abnormally distend the vessels of the liver; you will have a condition of chronic inflammation or engorgement, or too much blood produced, which, in turn, will cause degeneration and disease of the structure of the liver itself. So you have many cases of serious liver disease, induced by constipation. Of course, I need not tell you that the poisoned blood which I have said must result from constipation will carry some of this poison to all



the various parts of the body, and will produce injurious effects on them, thus interfering with the whole function of life. Let me close the list of ills produced by constipation, by telling you that death even may be caused by simple costiveness, when it has existed for a long time, and has become firmly established. To support this rather startling statement, let me quote the following remarkable case from Dr. Beale's work, already referred to. He says: "Constipation has caused death. I have myself seen such a case. I recollect an old lady who had been bed-ridden for years, and was, in fact, dying when she came under my observation, whose abdomen had increased to an enormous size. To my great astonishment, when I came to examine it, I found the swelling due to an enormous accumulation of hard fecal matter. There was no fluid, and very little gas; but the whole abdomen (or belly) seemed occupied by a huge mass of hardened fæces, I should think, amounting in weight to thirty or forty pounds. Unfortunately, I only saw the



patient a few hours before death, when she was reduced to the last state of exhaustion, and when it was impossible to interfere. In this case, fæces had probably been gradually accumulating in the intestines without attracting notice. The patient being bed-ridden, the circumstance seems to have escaped observation. Probably if a medical practitioner had been allowed to interfere some six months before, the patient might have been saved. Injections might have been given, and the contents of the bowel thus removed, before any harm to it had resulted.

I have now told you enough, I think, to make you fully realize the absolute necessity of free and daily evacuations from the bowels. You will now know, if you did not before, that the evil results of constipation are not confined to the bowels, but ramify throughout the whole organism. Indeed, they have no boundary. Their field of operation is only limited by the limits of the body itself.

Let us now see how you can procure these much desired daily evacuations without the use of drugs.

PART THIRD.

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HOW TO PROCURE DAILY EVACUATIONS WITHOUT  
THE USE OF DRUGS.

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In the above title I emphasize the word *Drugs*, because I wish you to understand that the words *drugs* and *medicines* do not necessarily mean one and the same thing, though to the non-professional mind these terms convey the same idea, and the ordinary individual regards both *drugs* and *medicines* as articles which must come from the druggist's shelf. All drugs are medicines, but all medicines are not necessarily drugs. To point this difference, let me quote from the standard and exhaustive work on "Therapeutics and Materia Medica," by one of the greatest authorities now living, Professor Alfred Stillé, of Philadelphia. In the very first line of his introductory chapter, he says, "*Medicines* are substances used for the cure of diseases." Further on, he says, "In some sense, even, all food is medicinal, for it

counteracts hunger, the first symptom of a disease which tends directly to death." The word *drug* is less comprehensive in its meaning, and ought to be confined to those articles which the general public understand by the term *medicine*. Its use should be restricted to those articles whose *sole* use in the human system is to cure disease, while many articles comprised under the head of *medicines* (as Professor Stillé has told us) may be used not only to cure disease, but also simply as food. To illustrate this, in what I am sorry to say will probably be the most familiar manner to the majority of men, let me remind you that when you take a drink of brandy to relieve a stomach-ache, the brandy might here be considered a medicine, but you would hardly be willing to call it a drug, though, indeed, I must confess, it takes rank among the poisons. Again, many a severe case of dyspepsia will be cured by strict adherence to a milk diet. Milk is here a *medicine*, but no one will venture to call it a *drug*. I draw this distinction between medicines and drugs, because I

am now going to tell you that while much benefit will be derived by the person of costive habit from the use of certain *medicines*, about which I will inform you, nothing but injury and a further confirmation of the constipation can result from the indiscriminate use of *drugs*; a habit which I exceedingly regret to say is so common among our people, that the manufacturers of the various patent cure-all, anti-bilious and anti-costive pills have been enabled to build up enormous fortunes founded upon the gullibility (if I may be allowed the word) and ignorance of the laws of physiology of their victims. I use the word *victims* advisedly. I pity from the bottom of my heart the poor, well-meaning person, who, as a result of ignorance of the functions of his own body, will pay his money for and consume large quantities of these medicines, whose chief merits lie in the cunning minds of their manufacturers, and in the expensive and flaming advertisements of properties which they do not possess, and by which means many intelligent persons are duped into

buying them, and do not discover their mistake until very serious and sometimes irreparable injury has been done. Many of these medicines will open the bowels, it is true ; I do not deny this ; but you must not be satisfied with this superficial action ; look deeper, and see what they do. They open the bowels because they contain certain *drugs* which possess the property of *stimulating* the muscular tissue in the bowels or rubber tube to increased action, and so they force the contents of this tube further and further along, until they finally reach the anus and are expelled.

*Stimulation* is an artificial process. In order that our functions may be properly carried on, and that we may have healthy life, there must be nothing artificial about us. All our actions, voluntary and involuntary, must conform to nature and be natural. You all know that *stimulation* is always followed by a corresponding depression. A certain quantity of alcohol taken into the system will stimulate every part of it ; all your organs will act more rapidly, you will live

faster, as it were. When this stimulating action has passed away you suffer from depression, evidenced in numerous ways.

You are morose, melancholy and low-spirited, evidencing mental depression. You experience chilly sensations, showing depression of the function which generates heat. You have no appetite, showing depression of the general system. Your stomach cannot properly digest what you take into it, showing depression of the digestive function. And so on indefinitely, all your varied functions will clearly make known to you the inevitable depression that always follows stimulation. When the habitual drinker of alcohol has taken a glass or two too much at night, he knows full well the general depression which he experiences in the morning, and unfortunately he finds it necessary to consume more alcohol, in order to again stimulate his varied functions, so as to once more bring them up to that standard which, in the ordinary healthy, temperate person would constitute only natural action. Ultimately his system becomes so

accustomed to this stimulating action of alcohol that his organs cannot act properly without it, and so, in order to live with any degree of comfort, he is obliged to daily saturate his tissues with this poison ; or if he has sufficient manly resolution to discard this baneful habit, he must suffer terrible depression and many physical ills before his system can be brought to that healthy and natural condition by which it may be enabled to act simply as a result of the natural causes furnished to it by the Founder of Nature. So it is with this indiscriminate use of opening medicine. The bowels become ultimately so accustomed to the artificial stimulating action of powerful drugs, that they absolutely refuse to move without their aid ; they are dependent on them for sufficient power to expel their contents ; and as with alcohol, so with these drugs, long continued use breeds such tolerance of their effects that each successive dose must needs be larger than the preceding one, until, finally, enormous doses are required to procure a single evacuation from the bowels, which should



have occurred naturally and spontaneously if this pernicious habit had not been cultivated. I could tell you of one case where from twenty to thirty powerful pills are required to move the unnaturally torpid bowels. Do you not now think it wrong and very injurious to use these medicines, about which you know absolutely nothing, without first obtaining the advice of a competent physician, who has made the action of these medicines the study of his life? If any lawyer reads this book, let me ask him if he would not consider a man very foolish, and very much to be criticised for want of good judgment, if, throwing aside the services of the legal profession, he were to undertake the management of his own law business, without having had any previous training in that line? And so on, I might draw the comparison in every profession. But when we come to medicine, this question assumes much more importance; it then really becomes a *vital question*. When a man meets with financial misfortunes, his friends all say, to console him for his loss, "Oh,



well, you have good health." Those of a religious turn of mind daily pray for a preservation of health. Parents are anxiously solicitous about the health of their children. And yet, in spite of all this desire for health, these very persons will deliberately undertake to doctor themselves, and, as invariably happens when a man undertakes anything about which he knows nothing, they make many errors, and, instead of doing themselves good, only make matters worse; and this in the face of the fact that their Creator has placed at their service the science of medicine and its practitioners, in order that all curable ills may be intelligently treated. This is not a plea for physicians; far from it. Were I selfishly to consider the doctor, to the exclusion of the welfare of his patient, I would advise you all to freely use these proprietary medicines and wonderful specifics for everything; because by so doing you would ultimately bring about such a state of ill health that you would of necessity fall into the hands of the physician, and then your system

would be so deranged that it would cost you much more time and many more dollars to secure a restoration to health than if you had sought intelligent counsel and advice in the beginning of your trouble. The venerable lawyer of our city, the Hon. Eli K. Price, tells me one of the most important secrets of his great age (nearly eighty-four years) and splendid health, when he says, "I am as watchful as to my food as is the smelter of iron that his furnace shall not chill and choke; and regulate my food to prevent constipation or laxity, *rather than resort to medicine, which I avoid using until necessary*; and in illness, act in strict obedience to my chosen physician of regular graduation." And he tells me that though he has been sick at times, from overwork, when he would be compelled to pay attention to hygienic laws, that "my recuperations have been to a higher point of health, even to the present year, when eighty-three years old." Have I not, now, said enough to convince you that the unintelligent use of drugs can only be productive of ultimate harm?

It is like playing with fire ; if you trifle with it long enough, you will surely be burned. So let me beg you, if you desire good health—and show me the man or woman who *really* and *sincerely* does not, and I am prepared to attach my name to a certificate of insanity—never to take a single dose of opening medicine after you have read these pages, without the advice of your physician. Sometimes it is necessary to use them, but let your doctor be the judge. If the hygienic directions I will give you, when fairly and patiently tried, do not suffice to establish a regular habit of evacuations, make up your mind that the constipation from which you are suffering is in reality a disease, as much so as pleurisy or pneumonia, and go to your doctor at once and follow his directions implicitly.

I might here say that some persons seem to be so constituted that an evacuation only every second day constitutes in them the *natural* action of the bowels, and they do not seem to suffer the slightest inconvenience from it ; and again, some

persons in good health will have two and may be three passages daily. In these cases such persons may rest easy and satisfied ; they need not endeavor to procure daily evacuations. Still, however, these are only exceptional instances, every rule has exceptions ; and so I can, without fear, enunciate the fundamental principle, that “ *without a daily free evacuation from the bowels perfect health is impossible.*”

Just here I will tell you of a remarkable case. The first edition of this little work brought me many letters, and among them the following remarkable one, detailing a case so unique that I feel sure it will be of interest to you. This case illustrates in a most marked way the fact that no universal panaceas exist for any trouble. What will do for one man will be utterly useless with another. It contains also some very instructive information. Some of my costive readers may try, as my correspondent did, all the means I will recommend, and yet may fail to procure regular evacuations, as he failed. Such persons

may try the expedient to which he finally resorted, and succeed with it. Therefore, with his permission, I will give you his letter in full: “My dear Doctor, I thank you for the two books; the one on Constipation I have just finished reading, and having inherited costiveness on the maternal side for over one hundred and fifty years, I can appreciate all your sensible suggestions on the subject; yet from personal experience, I know them all to be ineffectual to cure, at *least in my case*. After trying everything, as food, of a laxative nature, including fine, large wheat, ground in an ordinary coffee mill, and then boiled down to a jelly, and eaten with molasses or cream, I finally abandoned all and fell back on the daily use of a *syringe*. For over twelve years past I have never even attempted an evacuation without its use. If I go from home for a day or a month I take one with me. My case is doubtless a peculiar one, as everything gets through the hose (or bowel), without pain or even inconvenience, but when in the rectum

(lower bowel), a drying process commences, as fierce, hungry and quick, as if the *faeces* had fallen into a kiln. A little water, say a pint, put into the rectum and held there a few minutes, will lubricate the dry, hard accumulations of a day, and, without straining, I am saved the horrors of prolapse, have a pleasant peristaltic movement, and go about my daily work, a cheerful and happy man. Friends whom I meet in the streets of Philadelphia often inquire what it is that gives such health and complexion at sixty-five. To the ladies we say, on our farm in Delaware County we have the spring that Ponce de Leon spent so much time in searching for, the rejuvenating water that gave renovated youth to all who drank or bathed in it. To my male friends I sing the wonders and blessings of the syringe." A few days after the receipt of this letter I met my correspondent, and he gave me more of the particulars of his interesting and remarkable case. All of his family, with but one single exception, are equally as costive as

he is, and all are prepared to glorify the syringe. For years he suffered tortures, really agony. Several days would elapse without an evacuation. He would be miserable, low spirited, gloomy and despondent. Appetite and sleep would be impaired. His food would not taste right. Finally, after several days, he would seek the closet and attempt to force an evacuation. The hard, dry, large and irritating masses of fecal matter would be slowly forced along the bowel, producing a stretching, a distending of this canal, and causing such pain, such suffering, such agony, that I can readily believe the description given to me by *many* female patients, that the terrible suffering experienced from an evacuation of this nature is similar to, in kind, and only a little less severe than the tearing, distending and heart-rending pains of childbirth. When finally the fecal matter would leave the bowel, this terrible straining would cause some of the bowel to protrude after it, and he would have prolapse. Then he tells me this suffering, this annoyance, this nervous

and uncomfortable condition, into which his terrible ordeal had thrown his whole system, would last nearly all day. In a few days this awful procedure would have to be repeated, and his life in the meantime be rendered miserable by unhappy anticipations of his inevitable suffering. I will ask any of my female readers who may happen to be mothers, whether they would have any peace, happiness or quietude, if they felt sure that, regularly *once a week*, they would be compelled to undergo the sufferings of labor. My unfortunate correspondent was for many years compelled every few days to undergo a process very nearly as painful. His physique was wonderful, otherwise such strain and wear and tear would have killed him. He informed me that his mother, who was afflicted with this costive habit, died when about fifty years of age, and he added, "I firmly believe that had she been acquainted with the use of the syringe and its merits, she would, in the natural course of events, have lived to be eighty." My friend was treated



by nearly all the prominent physicians of Philadelphia ; he tried every hygienic means to overcome his trouble, but derived only temporary benefit. His life was in reality a burden to him. He could see pleasure in nothing. Finally he became acquainted with the syringe. A magical change came over him. With its use, daily, free, copious and painless evacuations became the rule. His sleep and appetite became good. His disposition became joyous, he looked on the bright side of life. Should I point him out to you, and ask you to guess his age, I am sure you would say about fifty. He is sixty-five, and hale, hearty, vigorous, possessing an even and equable temperament, leading a regular and comfortable life ; he should, according to all natural laws, live for very many years.

Let us begin where this costive habit usually commences, that is to say, in childhood. Most babies suffer from constipation. If your baby's bowels are not moved daily, I will tell you a simple procedure which will generally secure a

passage. Take a piece of ordinary note paper, not too stiff, and roll it into an old-fashioned lamp lighter; insert the sharp end carefully, gently and gradually into the bowels, for a distance of about two inches; let it remain for a few minutes. The presence of this paper will slightly irritate the bowels, not enough to do harm, but just enough to bring on sufficient action of their muscular coat to expel the contents. Smear the point with Castile soap before introducing, so that it may more easily slip in. If this fails, procure a small, hard-rubber syringe, and daily inject into the bowel one or two syringefuls of *warm (not hot)* water; this will aid the contraction of the bowel, and will, at the same time, soften and dilute its contents, so that they may the more easily be carried out. If this warm water fails, use a little Castile soap in the water. If the bowels still remain unopened, substitute plain olive oil for the soap and water. If your baby is naturally costive, that is to say, if he does not have a regular daily evacuation, you should practice this injection daily, and I

would recommend bedtime, after baby is undressed and just before being put into bed, because a full and free evacuation from the bowels will insure to him a full night of sound and refreshing sleep. Attention to the bowels becomes of paramount importance after baby has commenced to cut his teeth. All mothers know that when teething babies are particularly liable to convulsions. This is due to the fact that the teeth, in forcing their way through the gums, irritate and inflame them, and this irritation of the gums is conveyed, by the reflex action about which I have told you, to the brain, and irritating this delicate organ, will cause convulsions. Now, if, in addition to the irritation from teething, baby's bowels are also irritated by the retention in them of a foul mass of decayed matter, the liability to convulsions is doubled. This irritation of the gums will produce a feverish state of the blood ; now, if the bowels are costive, this feverishness will be increased. If you are nursing your baby, it will be well for you to eat freely of such food as I shall

tell you, further on, has a tendency to open the bowels ; baby receiving this through the medium of your milk, will be made regular. Be careful, however, to avoid such articles as experience tells you will give baby colic. If these simple means fail, do not resort to castor oil or any other drug, but ask your doctor what to do.

In this connection a word for what are generally termed "*cross children*." It is not natural for a child who is well to be cross. Of course, there are exceptions to this, as to every rule. But in the majority of cases, a child whose organs are all working properly, who has plenty to eat, and who is not in any way irritated, will be good ; it will not cry and worry. Therefore, if your child is fretful and peevish, and at the same time is in good health, examine as to whether the clothing is irritating or fits badly, or whether a pin may be sticking him. If you can find no cause, then you may suspect *worms*. The presence of these parasites in the bowels, I doubt not, has earned for many a little girl or boy the unjust

soubriquet of “*cross*.” When you suspect these worms to be present, having excluded all other causes for the crossness, you may purchase some *good worm syrup* from a RELIABLE druggist, and use it. I am not an advocate of “*home doctoring* ;” I heartily condemn the practice ; my books are not meant to supplant, but merely to aid the advice of the doctor ; still, in this trifling and *excessively* common trouble of worms, I do not think you will do your child any harm by using some simple worm syrup, according to the printed directions of some *reliable*, mind you, I say reliable, apothecary.

When your baby becomes a little girl or boy, and is able to toddle about and eat table food, you can, *in addition* to the means I have already indicated, use certain articles of food. A very good practice is to give your children oatmeal mush for breakfast. This oatmeal, after all the nourishment is removed from it by digestion in the stomach and bowels, still leaves a large indigestible residue, which is somewhat irritating to

the lining membrane of the bowels ; not enough here, again, to do harm, but just enough to remove the torpidity which may exist and excite the tube to healthy action. Bran bread, unbolted flour, grits, cracked wheat, and the like, may also be used at breakfast for the same purpose. One of the most important elements in establishing and maintaining a habit of daily evacuations is *regularity*. When I am requested to prescribe for a case of constipation, my first instruction to the patient is to determine what time of the day is the most convenient for them to devote to this important function, and when they have settled on this hour, I insist upon their seeking the water closet *precisely at the same hour each day*. I tell them to remain there for a few minutes, and to strain *gently*; if they strain very much they will be liable to do themselves a great deal of harm. If they fail at first, I tell them to go the next day at the same time, and so on, day after day, until, ultimately, this process of coaxing will have the desired effect on the lazy and torpid bowels, and

a regular daily habit will be established, and the desire will manifest itself each day at precisely the same hour. Then I caution them that, having once established, they must never neglect this desire. Every one has experienced the fact that if you resist a desire to have the bowels moved, after a little while this desire will disappear, and no effort of the will can bring it back; well, one day's neglect of this desire, in a person who has been for some time constipated, will, in many cases, derange the bowels for several days. So, as soon as your baby is large enough, put him regularly every day, at the same hour, on his chair, and giving him toys to amuse himself, let him remain there until his bowels have been moved. Do not fret and worry if your baby is costive; nearly all babies and young children are so. I once heard a prominent physician, the father of a large family, say that his different children came to him daily for an injection, with as much regularity as they would eat their dinners. He would give them the injection,

but at the same time would use the means I have given you to produce a regular habit, and ultimately, as his children grew older, the injections became unnecessary. Keep up this supervision until your children have grown to be young men and women, and they will not forget the training they have had, but will continue through life to understand and appreciate the necessity of regularity in this respect, and will, in turn, impress it upon their children, and so I warrant you not a small share of disease and bad health will be averted. You know how necessary it sometimes is to *coax* an obstinate child to do as you may desire, and every one is familiar with the coaxing requisite to move a balky horse. Well, this process which I have just described to you is one of coaxing: by offering the opportunity at regular and stated intervals, you coax, you beg, as it were, the obstinate and lazy bowels to healthy action, to do as you desire, and as in the cases of the obstinate child and the balky horse, your efforts will ultimately be crowned with success,



and the bowels, like the child and the horse, will eventually yield to your repeated pleadings, and a regular habit will be established. If you do not at first succeed in establishing this habit of regularity, do not fret and worry; if you do, you will make yourself feverish, fretful and irritable, probably cause a headache and make matters worse. Take the refusal of your bowels to act coolly and philosophically; wait until the next day and try again. I need hardly tell you that should the desire to evacuate arise before the next day comes, do not refuse obedience to its commands.

I have known many obstinate cases of constipation to be ultimately overcome by the following simple method; Pare an apple and eat it before breakfast, chewing it thoroughly, until it becomes pulpy, before swallowing; on top of this drink a glass of *cold* water, then eat your breakfast. In many cases a desire to have the bowels moved will be experienced immediately after breakfast, when this habit is persevered in. I have known some persons who never experienced the desire

immediately after breakfast, but who, after a short walk, would have a copious movement. These persons would always *walk* to their place of business and seek the water-closet immediately after reaching there. Muscular exercise is a most powerful agent in promoting regularity of bowel action. I have known persons who were subject to attacks of constipation and biliousness, foul mouth and disordered stomach, who would take a brisk five-mile walk in the pure, bracing and invigorating air, and upon returning home would have a copious discharge from the bowels, followed by immediate relief from all their distressing symptoms. You all know that a brisk walk in the country, where the air is pure and uncontaminated, has a tendency to quicken the circulation and to elevate the spirits and remove the general depression, physical and mental, to which the residents of our large and crowded cities are so liable; well, in this general elevation or natural stimulation of all our muscles and organs, the muscular coat of the bowels comes in for its share, and, stimulated

to a certain extent, its unnatural torpidity is removed, and it obtains sufficient strength and vigor to expel its contents. Also, this muscular exercise causes a change, a transformation of the muscular elements concerned in its performance into so much dead and decayed matter, seeking removal from the body, wherein it has performed its duty, and is no longer of any use ; so that this additional bulk of matter, being superadded to that already stored up in the bowels, makes a stronger impression on them, the demand for removal becomes greater, and hence the torpid bowels are finally compelled, in spite of their laziness, to act. So I would recommend to the costive man a brisk, daily walk of five miles in the country, and to the woman half that distance. If you can secure pleasant and cheerful company in this walk, so much the better ; if you cannot, employ your mind with pleasant thoughts, to the exclusion of business. Select a beautiful country, in which the aspect of nature is varied, so that the eye may not become tired and the mind exhausted

by monotony. Make this walk a *pleasure*, and not a *duty*. Do not tell me that you cannot find time for this daily walk ; that you are too busy, and so on. Charles Dickens, who probably performed as much and as satisfactory work in his lifetime as any man who ever lived, was able to make time for an almost daily *ten-mile* walk, to which he invariably resorted when he felt out of sorts and in poor spirits. When oppressed, from too much work, and I dare say, sometimes from costiveness, he would write, in his off-hand way, to his intimate friend, "Come for a stroll in the country and a chop." Off they would start, and after a brisk five-mile walk in the country surrounding London, would indulge in a chop and a mug of ale or beer, and, after a short rest, back they would speed to town. These walks, enlivened and made pleasant by the companionship and conversation of his most intimate friend, during which, no doubt, they would exchange ideas upon and discuss the various themes suggested to them by the surrounding nature, would

always bring the great novelist back to the city full of health and good spirits, and amply prepared to make up by increased power of application (for the time consumed in recreation) to his favorite literary work, which has made his name famous for all time in every portion of the globe in which the English language is or may be spoken. Do not neglect this all important matter of exercise. I know you are prepared to doubt the influence of exercise of your legs in causing extra activity of your bowels, but nevertheless, in spite of your skepticism, this relation does exist; and if you do not believe me, ask some doctor in whose opinion you have confidence. Some judgment must, however, be used in this matter of exercise, or you may do more harm than good. "One man's meat is another man's poison," you know. You must ever bear in mind that there does not exist such a thing as a "universal panacea." This very five-mile walk may cure constipation in one person and only serve to confirm the habit in another. Try it, however, and let

your own experience be your guide. As a rule, a person whose occupation is of a sedentary nature will be more benefited by a short walk, say of two or three miles, than he will by one of five. Why? Because evenness of life is most conducive to health. If a person be accustomed to a quiet, sedentary life, and suddenly breaks away from his work to indulge in a brisk five-mile walk, the change from his usual mode of life is too sudden and severe, and his system receives an unpleasant shock, which it will probably resent. While, on the other hand, one whose occupation is of an active character will receive, not a shock, but a gentle and pleasant stimulus from this same walk. Exercise, and especially that form of exercise derived from walking, will be particularly valuable to judges and lawyers. Their lives, from the nature of their occupations, must be sedentary, and worse than sedentary. Much as I respect an upright and honest judge, believing, as I do, that his profession is one of the very highest known to man, his responsibilities and his power for

doing good, if this power be properly and intelligently and faithfully made use of, enormous, yet I thoroughly and sincerely pity him. He is, in reality, himself a sacrifice to human justice, as much so as the criminal in the dock before him, upon whom he passes sentence of capital punishment. His sacrifice is a slow and prolonged one; hence it is not appreciated as it should be. The book-keeper and the clerk receive the pity and commiseration of sanitarians, because their work is so confining. How much more the poor judges are deserving of this pity I shall endeavor to show you. A book-keeper or a clerk is confined, it is true, nearly all day in his office, and does not find time for muscular exercise; but, as a rule, the number of people who inhabit this same office, in proportion to the space for air, is so small that he is assured a sufficiency of pure, wholesome atmospheric air, which supplies him with an abundance of the health and life-giving oxygen. Again, the business offices of mercantile men (in Philadelphia, at least, and I imagine in

most large cities) are, as a rule, at some distance from their homes, so that by *walking* to and from their offices they secure a considerable amount of exercise. Literary men lead very sedentary lives, but this is their own fault and not their misfortune. They can arrange their hours and places of work to suit themselves. They can, if they so desire, have plenty of exercise. They can live in the country, and in fair weather do their work out of doors, under the shelter of a tent, thus receiving plenty of air, and can intermit their work every now and then for a few minutes' muscular exercise. The large, successful, and wealthy merchant can arrange, if he so pleases, his hours of business so as to allow him plenty of time for exercise; he can have plenty of air in his office, and can every now and then refresh himself with a short trip. The physician, busy and hard worked though he may be, exposed constantly to contagion, yet, from the very nature of his occupation, he receives a sufficiency of exercise. If not very successful, he makes his professional



visits on foot, and thus gets exercise. If very busy, he is continually alighting from and getting into his carriage, ascending and descending stairs, all of which is exercise for his muscles. The mechanic and laboring man all exercise their muscles. But the poor judge ; let us follow him. From ten in the morning until three in the afternoon, for ten, and in some cases, for twelve months in the year, he is compelled to *sit quietly* in a crowded court room. The room not only contains more persons, by a large majority, than even the most improved method of ventilation could furnish a sufficiency of oxygen to, were they pure and immaculate as angels, but in addition to this overcrowding, which would in itself alone poison the atmosphere, the majority of the occupants are from the very lowest and dirtiest classes of society. Their lungs and their bodies are constantly giving out foul odors of rotten tobacco and worse whisky, decayed tissue and filth of all kinds, to still further poison and deteriorate the air of this overcrowded room. And in this at-

mosphere of filth and poison the poor judge is obliged to *quietly and passively sit*, hour after hour, and day after day, no exercise for his muscles, all brain work. Is he not a sacrifice? Is he not to be pitied? Is it any wonder that his bowels become torpid and lazy, and he is costive? I will advise all judges who desire to have health, long life, and regular daily evacuations from the bowels, to make their residence in the pure and uncontaminated country, three or four miles out. When court adjourns they should hurry to their homes; riding or driving out will afford them good exercise. Let them fly, at the very earliest moment, from the pest house they have been inhabiting all day to the pure country, and rid their lungs and body of the accumulated filth. If they will not do this, let them make a daily practice of taking a good long walk in the suburbs of their city, where the air will be less contaminated than in the heart of the city. If you follow my advice you will have regular daily evacuations, and all the subsequent health, pleasure and comfort de-

pendent upon them. If you do not you will be costive, and you know now what that means. In connection with this recommendation of walking, let me urge upon you the free use of all kinds of muscular exercise, such as riding, driving, swimming, skating, and the like, using the same judgment in their employment as I have indicated in my remarks on walking. They will not only serve to improve your general health, but will exert a specific influence in aiding the torpid bowels.

I must here condemn one of the most usual forms of exercise indulged in by young men, but will make a qualified condemnation. If you will get into a boat and paddle leisurely two or three miles, resting every few minutes for a few seconds, you will derive positive benefit from this form of exercise. But how few young men row after this fashion. They join a club, and from the start their ambition is to form one of the racing crew; consequently, they practice, hour after hour and day after day, rowing violently, for many miles, and imagine they are developing their strength.

They do develop their voluntary muscles, that is, those under the control of their will, but this they do in many cases at the expense of their vital organs. This violent strain which they put on their hearts will, in many cases, so injure this important organ that serious disease will ensue, and though they may become magnificent specimens of physical development, they break down prematurely, and become old men in middle life, invalids while still young, with a diseased heart. This fact is familiarly illustrated in Wilkie Collins' novel, "Man and Wife" (I think it is), in the person of Geoffry Hamlyn, who is one of the typical English amateur athletes of the present day. His sole aim in life seems to be to develop his muscles. He succeeds admirably, and is a marvel of brute strength. He undertakes to engage in a running match, though warned by physicians that he may ruin himself by so doing. He enters the race and out-distances all competitors; when nearing the end he suddenly totters and falls unconscious on the track;

he is picked up a confirmed invalid, a broken-down man, with heart disease, and this once magnificent specimen of manhood, though still young and apparently robust, seems like an old man, and drags out a miserable existence of suffering, ultimately dying many years sooner than was necessary. He had overstrained his heart and it had succumbed. Again, even though you may not desire to train for a race, you will generally form one of a crew of four or six, who start out to row a given distance. Under the command of a coxswain you all pull together, and are anxious to make your boat speed through the water. Should you become exhausted, your pride urges you to keep up with your companions, and so neglecting the warning you receive, you continue to overstrain your heart, and, ultimately, disease will ensue.

I would decry running as an exercise; this form of exercise is no better than walking, and is far more dangerous. In a word, all violent exercise is injurious, and none should be

indulged in that will cause the heart to beat violently and very rapidly. Exercise should never be carried to a point of actual fatigue; stop a little short of this and you will benefit yourself; go beyond it and you do yourself an injury.

Before leaving this question of exercise, I will refer to a paper read at a recent meeting of the Philadelphia County Medical Society, by Dr. Benjamin Lee, on the "Treatment of Constipation by the *Swedish Movement Cure*." As all the motions in it described really mean muscular exercise, active or passive, I will transcribe it as I find it reported in the *Medical and Surgical Reporter*: "In order the more readily to convey a definite idea of the principles on which the *Swedish movement cure* is based, and the mode in which these principles are carried into practical execution, I have written upon the blackboard a prescription for that *bete noire* of the profession, constipation. I recommend this mode of prescribing, as the sword which, so far at least as a large amount of chronic disease is concerned,

will cut the Gordian knot of the problem with which we have been wrestling this evening, namely, the relations of the druggist to the physician; for I venture to say that no apothecary can be found who will undertake to compound a prescription like this. You will observe that each clause of the prescription contains two parts; the first is the attitude or position to be assumed by the patient in taking the movement; the second is the movement itself. I have distinguished them by drawing a line down the middle of the prescription.

#### PREScription OF MOVEMENTS FOR A CASE OF OBSTINATE CONSTIPATION.

1. Heave standing.	Chest expansion, deep inspiration.
2. Half lying.	Leg flexion and extension (p. r).
3. High ride fall sitting.	Trunk twisting (p. r).
4. Toward standing.	Thigh extension, forced (p. r).
5. High ride turn sitting.	Circular twisting with pressure upon stomach and in the lumbar region.
6. Extension standing.	Colon stroking.
7. Forehead fix, high knee astride standing.	Spine extension, forced (p. r.)
8. Side stretch standing.	Liver vibration.
9. Lying.	Abdomen kneading, pressure with vibration over solar plexus.

“The attitudes being very various, their nomenclature is necessarily somewhat cumbersome, while its foreign parentage makes it awkward to

our ears. Suffice it to say, that each variation has reference to special groups of muscles, or certain organs.

“The first movement in this prescription is a respiratory one, taken in the erect position, with the chest thrown out, and accompanied by deep inspirations; its object being to invigorate the entire system by introducing a large amount of oxygen into the blood, and by means of this pure blood supply to bring both muscles and nerves into a highly vitalized state, in which they will respond most readily to the stimulus of the subsequent movements.

“The second is derivative, designed to relieve congestion of the abdominal organs, by drawing down the blood into the lower extremities. In this, the trunk is placed at rest in a semi-recumbent posture. The letters (p. r.) will be noticed immediately after this movement. They signify that *patient resists*, the movement being made by the operator. This is, therefore, a *duplicated movement*, and the entire will of the patient



being concentrated upon this effort, it is powerfully revulsive.

“The third movement has two principal ends : the first, pressure upon the entire abdominal contents by the abdominal parietes (or walls of the belly), thus relieving congestion by forcing the blood out of the larger vessels ; and secondly, invigorating and developing the transverse and oblique abdominal muscles, which are rarely brought into play in ordinary exertions. The attitude is such as to fix the pelvis. The arms are then crossed over the top of the head, and the extended elbows are made use of as a lever, by means of which the trunk is twisted or rotated upon its axis, the patient resisting the operator’s effort.

“The fourth places the abdominal muscles, especially the *recti*, strongly upon the stretch, thus inviting a copious flow of blood into their capillaries, while at the same time, by irritating the muscles about the hip and perineum, and the *psoas* and *iliacus*, it stimulates the nerves of the lumbar and pelvic plexuses.

“The next consists in a rapid rotation of the entire trunk upon the pelvis, bringing all the muscles of the lower part of the trunk into play, and subjecting the pelvic viscera (or organs) to alternate pressure and relief from pressure. It promotes activity in the portal circulation (the liver), and stimulates peristaltic action. It is accompanied with firm pressure upon the stomach and in the lumbar region, the former with a view of stimulating the solar plexus, and the latter the lumbar nerves.

“The next movement is entirely passive, the patient standing, while the operator slowly and firmly strokes the colon in the direction of its vermicular wave; (the process of pressure or kneading, described on the next page) its primary object being to accelerate the passage of fecal masses and flatus (gases) through that portion of the canal, and its secondary object to stimulate its rhythmic contractions.

“The seventh produces extreme erection of the spine, thus affording increased space for the ab-

dominal organs, usually compressed by improper attitudes.

“The eighth movement is the movement-cure blue pill. The patient takes such an attitude as shall place the muscles of the right side strongly on the stretch (bending the body to the left), and the operator then produces a rapid vibration of the parietes (or walls) of the chest and abdomen immediately over the liver. The effect is to relieve congestion of that organ and excite a healthy flow of bile.

“Finally, the patient lies upon the back, and a thorough kneading of the abdomen is given, followed by pressure and vibration (or slapping) over the solar plexus (in the vicinity of the stomach). The circulation of all the abdominal viscera is thus stimulated, the passage of both chyle and fæces through the alimentary canal is aided, healthy secretion is promoted, undue accumulations of mucus are dislodged, and the great nervous centre of the organic system is roused into the highest state of activity. *There are very*

*few cases of constipation, however obstinate, which will resist a fortnight of this treatment daily, and many cases will yield in a week. The time occupied in carrying out this prescription is about an hour.*” The last sentence of this article, which I give in *italics*, will explain my reason for giving you the paper in full. This prescription can be more easily carried out than you imagine. Do not read the directions cursorily or hastily, lest you may forget them; read them carefully and commit the different movements to memory; the wife can then assist the husband, the husband the wife, the mother the daughter, the father the son, and so, by a course of mutual aid, this scourge of constipation may be removed from a whole family.

I have said what I have about exercise because what I tell you is not only pertinent to your general health, but it will also have an influence on your bowels.

Friction with a coarse towel over the abdomen will have a tendency to stimulate the bowels to action, and should always be practiced. Dr.

Birch, in his work on "Constipation," recommends pressure or kneading over the abdomen, to be made as follows: Commence low down on the right side, and press gently, but firmly, with your hand, and draw it upward until you reach the lower border of the ribs, then cross the abdomen to the left side and descend to the lowest possible point. This is the course taken by that portion of the bowels which I have described to you as the large intestine, and, by this pressure, you gently stimulate this part of the rubber tube to increased action, and so enable it to move along and finally expel its contents. This pressure should be practiced twenty or thirty times, morning and evening, and in connection with the other measures I have or will indicate.

A cold bath in the morning will be beneficial to some people, and many claim for it a high rank among practices calculated to stimulate the bowels to action. Try it, and if it agrees with you, persevere in it. If, however, you feel badly after its use; if the surface of your body feels

chilly and looks blue, make up your mind that a *cold* bath is injurious to you, and abandon it. You may then substitute for it the following procedure: Wring a towel out in *cold* water and lay it over the surface of your abdomen for a few minutes; in other words, take a *cold* abdominal bath; in many cases this will sufficiently stimulate the bowels to cause them to act, while you will escape the bad results to your system at large which the *full* cold bath might produce. In other cases the same procedure, substituting *warm* for *cold* water, will prove efficacious.

We now come to a very important factor in the promotion of regularity of evacuations from the bowels. *Diet or Food*. Some articles of food, as you no doubt are already aware, will have a tendency to produce costiveness, while other articles will promote regularity of action. I have already advocated the use of oatmeal, and bran bread, and the like, and told you how they act. Let us now examine this very important matter of diet more fully, and see of how much benefit

a correct knowledge on this subject may be to you. Fruit is an exceedingly potent agent in this connection. It contains nature's purgative. But here, again, we must use judgment. You all know the saying about fruit : "*In the morning it is as gold ; silver at noon, and lead at night.*" I have in my mind, while writing, a case in which this saying is almost literally true. In this case, an apple or any kind of fruit eaten before breakfast, and followed by the glass of water already recommended, invariably produces a full and copious passage immediately after breakfast ; but if this same person should eat an apple just before going to bed, it will lie on his stomach like lead, and ten chances to one he will lie awake half the night, tortured with dyspepsia. So, my costive friends, cultivate a habit of eating fruit of some kind before breakfast ; let it always be placed on the table, and let it constitute the prologue to the meal proper ; but avoid it at night. To those who can make a choice I would recommend an apple or an orange ; if you cannot choose, use

any fruit you can procure. Stewed prunes, apple sauce, stewed rhubarb, rhubarb pie, grapes, bananas, peaches, figs, dried apples, evaporated peaches, sliced peaches with cream and sugar, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries. Take your choice. If you do not like one, try another. Remember one thing, no matter what you try. Do not eat fruit for one day, and then, because your bowels are not moved, get disgusted, say there is no merit in its use, and give it up. Persevere ; you know that in everything success is the reward of perseverance, and here this rule holds good, as much so as in anything else. Cultivate the habit, persevere in its use throughout your life, remember the coaxing and the necessity for regularity about which I have told you, and, ultimately, success will be yours ; your bowels will be regular, and your health much improved.

We are very funny people in this world ; what great exertions we will undergo ; what laborious hardships persons will sometimes undertake of their own free will ; and yet if you were to en-



deavor to force these same people to do these same things, they would rebel, and it would be impossible to get them to do as you would desire. And all through the perverseness of human nature. What we desire to do is easily and pleasantly done, while if some one else compels us to do the same thing against our inclinations it becomes irksome, and assuming the shape of something we do not want to do, it becomes hard labor. So with this very matter of eating fruit. Nearly every one considers fruit as a luxury, an article to be sought after; but when they come to look on it as something suggested to them by another, as a medicine, I doubt not that many of my readers will turn from its use with distaste and cast it aside. Let me beg such people to be more philosophical; let me ask them not to let my recommendation of its use alter the flavor of the fruit for them. It will do them much good, and let me urge them to use it. A sufficient amount of water taken into the body is a requisite of regular evacuations. Because, if

you do not have enough water to properly soften and dilute the contents of your bowels, the mass therein contained will be so hard and dry that your bowels will find it hard work to move it along, and when it is finally expelled it will cause you much pain; because, not being properly diluted, the dead tissue has accumulated in a large, dry, and hard mass, which so distends the end of your bowel in passing from it as to cause much pain, sometimes amounting to positive agony. You all know that if you attempt to swallow a mouthful of food, without first allowing it to be thoroughly mixed with the saliva in your mouth, how it will stick in the throat, and how difficult it will be to swallow it, and how much pain this act will cause you. Well, I have already told you that the bowels are but a prolongation, a continuation of the throat, and if the matter in the bowels be hard and dry, this same trouble and pain in its movement along this tube will be experienced, only it will be increased, insomuch as while the throat is only about a foot and a half

long, the bowel is about twenty-five feet. So if your passages are large, hard, and dry, and cause you much pain, and if you partake sparingly of water, use it more freely. But be sure that in relieving your constipation you do not produce still greater ills ; in other words, be sure that the water you use is pure and clean. If you have the slightest reason to suspect its perfect purity, *boil* and *filter* it before using. Some persons, and particularly women, have a bad habit of drinking *tea*, and these women will say that in this tea they take water into their bodies ; so they do ; but in the large majority of cases this tea will cause indigestion, and, therefore, I cannot recommend its use.

Some forms of alcoholic liquors will have a tendency to move the bowels, such as beer, hock, cider, perry, and so on, but their use will ultimately make matters worse, because, by deranging the liver and stomach, as they sooner or later will, they will only serve finally to confirm the costive habit.

With some people milk is very constipating. If it has this effect on you, and if it agrees with you in other respects, try whether you cannot use it and obviate the constipating effects by the means I have indicated. If in spite of these agents the milk continues to keep you costive, you had better place it on the proscribed list. All fresh and green vegetables should be freely used by costive persons. The Almighty furnishes to us, in them, nature's purgative, and their use cannot be too highly commended. For many hundred years the world prospered on their use, and was surely not the loser, and most probably the gainer. The cupidity and invention of man has at last furnished to us the various canned vegetables now offered for sale. They gratify the palate in winter, when snow covers the ground and fresh vegetables are a thing of the past, but I am quite sure that at the same time they give rise to and maintain many cases of constipation.

Dr. Beale recommends, as very efficient in many cases, a small cup of sweetened black coffee,

before rising. Try it. Let me sum up by quoting from Dr. Beale's work. He says: "A liberal allowance of meat and a too highly nutritious diet favor constipation ; on the other hand, various kinds of fruit and many soft vegetables tend to prevent and relieve constipation." In conclusion, let me tell you that if you are constipated, and have been so for years, and if, after reading this little book, you come to realize and appreciate the necessity of regular evacuations, and make up your mind to use the means I have indicated to procure them, if at first you fail, try, and try, and try again ; but if you do not at first succeed, do not get nervous and fidgety ; you will make matters worse. If you have been constive for years, a few additional days of this habit will not work you very much additional injury, while serenity and evenness of mind will do much to overcome it. To use my favorite simile : if your stove becomes choked with ashes, it will do you no good to fret and fume about it ; but if you quietly and calmly set to work and remove the

ashes, put in fresh coal, and apply the vital spark or match, your fire will soon be as good as ever. So quietly and philosophically use the proper means to remove your human ashes, and to secure their daily and regular discharge, and your vital fire will ultimately burn as bright as ever, even though the flame may for years have been smothered beneath a foul mass of rotten débris. Hoping I may have made clear, even to the least intelligent mind, the means by which they may assure this daily regular and complete purification, I give you this little book for what it is worth.

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